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The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 *Creating Jobs, Investing in Our Country's Future, and Cutting Taxes For the People of Montana*

Today, the Senate approved the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, as amended, emergency legislation requested by President Obama that will create millions of jobs for American workers and begin to put the nation's economy back on track. We are confronting the most severe economic problems in generations as millions of Americans are struggling. That's why the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* will **create good-paying jobs; make investments in America's future; and cut taxes** for working families. Our plan also delivers transparency and accountability to guarantee that all taxpayer money is invested responsibly.

What does this mean for Montana?

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* is estimated to provide approximately **\$506.8 million** in the following benefits:*

Montana's Infrastructure and Science

In order to rebuild our weakening economy, these investments in our physical and cyber infrastructure will put Montanans immediately to work rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges, and will also enable the creation of a stronger and more efficient infrastructure for the 21st century economy.

- **\$19.7 million** through the **Drinking Water State Revolving Fund** to address the backlog of drinking water infrastructure needs
- **\$19.5 million** through the **Clean Water State Revolving Fund** to address the backlog of clean water infrastructure needs
- **\$168.3 million** in **Highway Funding** to be used on activities eligible under the Federal-aid Highway Program's Surface Transportation Program and could also include rail and port infrastructure activities at the discretion of the states
- **\$20 million** in **Transit Formula Funding** for investments in mass transit
- **\$4.5 million** through the **Public Housing Capital Fund** to enable local public housing agencies to address a national \$32 billion backlog in capital needs – especially those improving energy efficiency in aging developments – in this critical element of the nation's affordable housing infrastructure

- **\$7.9 million** in **HOME Funding** to enable state and local government, in partnership with community-based organizations, to acquire, construct, and rehabilitate affordable housing and provide rental assistance to poor families
- **\$3.8 million** through the **Homelessness Prevention Fund** to be used for prevention activities, which include: short or medium-term rental assistance, first and last month's rental payment, or utility payments. As such, most of this funding will go directly into the economy of local communities, as the funds will be used to pay housing and other associated costs in the private market

Education and Training in Montana

In order to compete in the 21st Century, we must have a well-educated workforce, capable of adapting to an ever-changing economic environment. Investing in education now will ensure that the next generation of Montana's workers is ready and able to meet the challenge of global competition. In the near-term, millions of workers have seen their jobs disappear, and find themselves unable to match their skill sets with existing opportunities. Providing job training in new and expanding fields will help to lower the unemployment rate and help today's workers better compete against foreign competition.

- **\$96.7 million** through the **State Fiscal Stabilization Fund** to local school districts and public colleges and universities in addition to incentive grants as a reward for meeting key education performance measures and additional funding for other high-priority needs such as public safety and other critical services, which may include education
- **\$39 million** for **Special Education Part B State Grants** to help improve educational outcomes for individuals with disabilities, raising the federal contribution to nearly 40 percent, the level established when the law was authorized more than 30 years ago
- **\$4.8 million** in **education technology** funds to purchase up-to-date computers and software and provide professional development to ensure the technology is used effectively in the classroom
- **\$42.3 million** for **Title I Education for the Disadvantaged** to help close the achievement gap and enable disadvantaged students to reach their potential
- **\$2.9 million** in **State Employment Service Grants** to match unemployed individuals to job openings through state employment service agencies and allow Montana to provide customized reemployment services
- **\$1.4 million** in **Dislocated Workers State Grants**, particularly for grants that support immediate strategies for regions and communities to meet their need for skilled workers, as well as longer-term plans to build targeted industry clusters with better training and a more productive workforce
- **\$1.2 million** for Department of Labor's **Adult State Grants**
- **\$2.9 million** for Department of Labor's **Youth State Grants**
- **\$1.9 million** for **Vocational Rehabilitation** to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and sustain gainful employment

Montana's Energy

The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* would provide investments in areas critical to the development of clean, efficient, American energy, including modernizing energy

transmission, research and development of renewable energy technologies, and modernizing and upgrading government buildings and vehicles.

- **\$4.1 million** through the **State Energy Program**
- **\$16.3 million** through the **Weatherization Assistance Program**

Indian Country Investments

According to Senator Byron Dorgan, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, “Nowhere in this nation are jobs and construction improvements more needed than on American Indian reservations. Tribal communities suffer an average unemployment rate of 50% and have faced longstanding infrastructure needs.”

To address these concerns, the Senate Committees on Finance and Appropriations, through the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, have included approximately \$2.9 billion in national funding to create jobs, improve infrastructure, and generally improve the quality of life of Native Americans in Montana:

- **Improving Indian Health Service and Indian Health Facilities** (\$545 million). Of this amount, \$50 million would go to fund contract health care services, \$85 million to improve health information technology, and \$20 million for health care equipment. The remaining funding would be dedicated to building new and repairing Indian health hospitals, clinics and sanitation and water facilities
- **Improving Access to Health Care** by prohibiting co-payments for Medicaid recipients, exempting some Indian property from inclusion in resource determinations for Medicaid and CHIP, and making it easier for these populations to receive Medicaid benefits through Medicaid-managed care organizations (\$25 million)
- **Strengthening Indian Education.** \$167 million would be dedicated to tribal and Bureau of Indian Education school construction, repairs, and modernizations
- **Addressing Tribal Public Safety and Justice.** \$325 million in funding would work to improve tribal justice systems and fight high violent crime rates in Indian Country. \$275 million in funding would be dedicated to building new and improving existing detention centers in Indian Country. The Interior Department recently reported unmet needs for Indian jails of \$8 billion. In addition, \$25 million would help strengthen tribal court systems, and \$25 million would go to improve drug and alcohol treatment in Indian Country
- **Improving Tribal Housing.** \$510 million would be dedicated to block and competitive grants administered through the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act to construct and rehabilitate reservation homes and other authorized projects. An additional \$25 million would go to the housing improvement program administered by the BIA
- **Improving Indian Reservation Roads.** \$486 million would be allocated to improving tribal and BIA roads, bridges, and reservation transit systems. Of this amount, \$320 would go the Indian Reservation Roads program within the Department of Transportation. An additional \$16.8 million would go to improve tribal transit. And \$150 million would go to improve tribal and BIA roads through the Department of the Interior
- **Improving drinking water and water service systems on reservations** (\$459 million). Included in this amount is \$274 million for Bureau of Reclamation Indian water projects. \$65 million for tribal irrigation and dams improvements. And tribal

governments would also receive approximately \$120 million through a set-aside in the Safe Drinking and Clean Water Revolving Funds

- **Other Improvements:**

- Indian Reservation Food Distribution (USDA) – \$5 million to support the approximately 86,000 low-income Native Americans who receive this monthly benefits in lieu of SNAP (food stamps) benefits
- BIA major facilities improvement and repair – \$115 million would go to repair existing federal buildings that are most in need of improvements
- BIA workforce training – \$20 million would help put to work and train unemployed persons on Indian lands
- BIA Indian Loan Guarantee Program - \$10 million would be used by the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development to issue guaranteed loans to tribal businesses and improve economic development on Indian lands
- Tribal Community Development Financial Institutions (Treasury) – \$20 million help build financial institutions in Indian Country
- Tribal Energy Efficiency Block Grants (set-aside) - \$42 million would go to fund tribal energy projects

Protecting the Vulnerable in Montana

The current economic crisis has affected all Montanans, but none more so than the most vulnerable among us. The spending proposed here will serve to lessen the blow of the current recession, providing immediate relief for children, the poor, and others who may find themselves struggling to put food on the table or a roof over their head. It will also address the urgent need to provide safe and secure places to live, even in neighborhoods that are struggling with high unemployment and surging foreclosure rates.

- **\$247,461** for **National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance**
- **\$261,650** through the **Emergency Food Assistance Program**
- **\$35.6 million** in **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** benefits (formerly Food Stamps)
- **\$172,693** for the **Emergency Food and Shelter Program**, which provides grants to nonprofit and faith-based organizations at the local level to supplement their programs for emergency food and shelter to provide for the immediate needs of the homeless
- **\$5.7 million** in **Child Care and Development Block Grants** to provide quality child care services for in low-income families who increasingly are unable to afford the high cost of day care
- **\$1 million** for **Head Start** to allow additional children to participate in this program, which provides development, educational, health, nutritional, social and other activities that prepare children to succeed in school
- **\$902,493** in **Community Services Block Grants** to local community action agencies for services to the growing numbers of low-income families hurt by the economic crisis, such as housing and mortgage counseling, jobs skills training, food pantry assistance, as well as benefits outreach and enrollment
- **\$500,000** for **Senior Meals Programs** to help senior meals programs cope with steep increases in food and fuel costs. Many programs are reducing meal deliveries to seniors or closing meal sites

Law Enforcement in Montana

- **\$3 million** in **Byrne/JAG grants** to support law enforcement efforts
- **\$222,847** for **crime victims compensation and assistance**
- **\$403,670** in **Internet Crimes Against Children Grants** to help law enforcement agencies enhance their investigative response to offenders who use the Internet, online communication systems, or other computer technology to sexually exploit children
- **\$1.4 million** in **Violence Against Women Grants** for victim services programs to improve the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes against women and to assist victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking who are in need of transitional housing, short-term housing assistance, and related support services

Additional Benefits for Montana

Unemployment Benefits in Montana. According to the Department of Labor, Montana could receive **\$19.6 million** in new funding if Montana fully enacts the UI modernization incentives that the legislation would provide.

Tax Relief for Montana Families and Businesses. According to the Senate Committee on Finance, the following are examples of tax provisions in the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* that will help Montana businesses and families, create jobs and get Montana's economy moving:

- Up to **\$500** for individuals and **\$1,000** for married couples for the **Making Work Pay Tax Credit**
- **\$300** to Social Security beneficiaries, SSI recipients, and disabled veterans
- **\$2,500** for the **American Opportunity Tax Credit** (an increase in the tax credit for higher education and allowing the credit for four full years)
- **Extended and increased Homebuyer Tax Credit** to both help aspiring homeowners and stabilize plummeting home prices
- **Extended Bonus Depreciation and Small Business Expensing** through 2009, allowing businesses that make capital investments to immediately deduct one-half the cost. Small businesses can immediately deduct 100 percent of the cost of these investments
- **\$1.6 billion** for **grants to schools and hospitals** for energy efficiency and combined heat and power system projects

The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* would protect over 26 million working families across the nation from the **Alternative Minimum Tax**, representing thousands of dollars in additional income taxes. According to the Congressional Research Service, **54,000 Montanans** would be protected from the Alternative Minimum Tax in 2009.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families in Montana. According to the Congressional Research Service, would receive **\$1.1 million** in TANF supplemental grants under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These supplemental grants provide additional assistance to states with high population growth and/or increased poverty. Seventeen states qualify and currently receive these grants, which would expire in June 2009. The legislation would extend these grants for Fiscal Year 2010.

** The benefits described in this fact sheet represent estimates of highlights of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. It is not a complete listing of all the programs included in the legislation. Due to rounding, the sum of the programs may not equal the estimated total.*